

Getting READY!

By MSG Ben Delaney, HQ, STARC

Thousands of soldiers have been deployed overseas in support of a possible war with Iraq, others are on their way and still others are preparing to go. Already, more than 150,000 National Guard and Reserve soldiers and airmen across the nation have been activated, more than at any time since Desert Storm in 1991. These soldiers include members of the California National Guard.

In California, at Camp Roberts, Army National Guard units that have been alerted, other units that have a definite date for mobilization, and still others that might be mobilized have been going through the Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) Center located on the post.

Soldier Readiness Processing plays an important part in preparing soldiers for possible deployment and for combat. It involves lots of

briefings for soldiers to get them

psychologically prepared. They get assistance in handling their personal affairs, including resolving any problems. They update their emergency notification forms, get new ID tags, if needed, get their financial and legal matters in order, enlistment extensions completed, and they also complete medical screenings, including necessary inoculations. The processing also includes counseling on recognizing signs of combat stress and what measures to take to avoid or minimize its effects.

Initial in-processing involves filling out a four-page checklist before the soldier ever gets started. It can take a soldier as little as three hours to complete all the processing stations, or as many as six-to-eight hours depending on whether any issues are identified.

Hundreds of members of the 1072nd and 2632nd Transportation Companies, the 270th MP Company and others have recently processed through the SRP Center.

Soldier Readiness Processing Noncommissioned Officer in Charge, Ken Foster, says "When we are done, we will have processed more than 1,200 soldiers, and that is the largest Soldier Readiness Processing, to my knowledge, we've ever completed." 🐾



PHOTOS BY SFC STEVE PAYER



Top Photo: A soldier gets new ID tags at the Camp Roberts SRP Center. **Left Photo:** Specialist David Chisom (right) helps out at the JAG office at the SRP Center.